

Naming the best comic books of all time is no easy task, with each new decade delivering an instant-classic from Marvel, DC Comics, Image, Dark Horse, and many more. But a handful of famous comic books and graphic novels stand out above all the rest.

The medium has been growing exponentially since its early days in the 20th century. Gradually evolving mainstream culture and artistic approaches changed how comics and their characters are written, with each passing decade seeing more great comic stories published. DC and Marvel have unsurprisingly created some of the most famous comics ever, but the likes of Dark Horse and Image spawned some gems as well. And seeing our ranking of the most iconic, acclaimed, or important comic books of all time, one publisher dominates the list.

#1 Sin City: His work with Batman and Daredevil is typically first to come to mind as writer and artist Frank Miller's best comics, but he's also written some classic non-superhero stories. One of the genre's best black-and-white comics, Dark Horse's *Sin City* is an acclaimed neo-noir story set in a bleak, authoritarian-run town in the United States. The comic was revered for its approach and heavy inspiration from pulp and crime-noir TV, movie, and magazine stories placed it as number 1 on the top 5 list.

#2 Preacher: As one of the comic book industry's "big two" publishers, DC Comics is primarily known for its superheroes. However, their Vertigo imprint of comics spawned some timeless non-superhero

classics. Garth Ennis and Steve Dillon's *Preacher* was one such cult-hit, with the story centered around a grim supernatural/religious disaster plaguing a small Texas town.

Jesse Custer, the titular preacher, becomes possessed by a supernatural entity comprised of pure goodness and pure evil, possibly becoming the most powerful entity in the universe. The story takes its small scope and eventually branches out across the country, meeting a bizarre cast of characters. Based on the storyline and plot I'm ranking it number 2

#3 Batman: The Long Halloween *The Dark Knight* has amassed an impressive catalog of some of the medium's best comics, and Jeph Loeb and Tim Sale's *The Long Halloween* frequently ranks among the most accomplished and influential (let alone best) comics. It's one of the best Batman comics to influence *The Dark Knight Trilogy*, proving to be one of the best examples of the superhero's best traits.

The story arc is anchored by a detective-thriller premise, highlighting an element of Batman that often goes criminally forgotten in live-action. It does so while still embracing the noir hero's dark, mythical atmosphere and imposing physical

prowess. *The Long Halloween* is an engrossing crime saga that reminds fans how masterfully grounded, street-level stories can be done and as such is ranking #3.

#4 KINGDOM COME: Expanding to the greater Justice League, *Kingdom Come* is a landmark comic in DC's pantheon of stories. This alternate-canon comic was a sort of meta deconstruction of "superheroes" as a concept. Veteran writer Mark Waid and iconic artist Alex Ross put together a miniseries that detailed the fall in prominence of the outdated "traditional" heroes and the rise of dangerous copycats.

The traditional superheroes fall out of touch with the changing times and new threats, with Batman's team trying to stop Lex Luthor and the impending conflict. It's a fascinating alternate tale that stands as one of the famous *Elseworlds* imprint's best comics.

And last but not least #5 the final comic I'll be ranking is **Batman: The Killing Joke:** As far as Batman goes, Moore and artist Brian Bolland created another one of the Caped Crusader's best and most influential comics. Though *The Killing Joke* was a 46-page one-shot rather than a fleshed-

**out series, the story told is impressively dense. Like with
The Long Halloween, *The Killing Joke* was instrumental as
reference material for *The Dark Knight Trilogy*, namely in
inspiring Heath Ledger's immortalized take on the Joker.**

AND THAT'S THE TOP 5

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